

THE DAILY STORY.

LOVE AND SHORTCAKE.

(Copyright, 1916, by W. W. Werners.)

Van Feed sat darning the second best tablecloth which had that day come home from the laundry in a decidedly bad condition. Considering the fact that the entire table linen store of the household had been reduced to one dozen napkins and three tablecloths, the small matter of a fresh rent in the second best would have been enough to bring sadness to Van's face, even if there had not been graver things to trouble her. One of these things was a growing headache that she dare not own even to herself. It was there, but she tried to smile it down as she had smiled down a great many unpleasantnesses hitherto. It was, however, gradually being borne upon her that she was doomed to a long future of this futile smiling with the headache going on just the same.

In contrast to her weary pallor and wistful eyes Rosamond came in like a crocus blown on the spring breeze. Rosamond was four years younger than Van and very pretty. Her black garb, which killed any attractiveness in the older sister, made Rosamond gleam like an opal set in black enamel or a flower fang on black velvet. Rosamond had been downtown and she had brought home a basket of strawberries.

"And I'll tell you why," she panted, merrily. "John's coming to supper. He really is! There's cream and I thought you could just whip up a shortcake. When there's shortcake you don't no-

At last it became evident that they all must walk.

"I'll have to put on the best tablecloth," Van said thoughtfully. "I can't be able to finish this if I make shortcake. Will you hush the berries?" There was a merely perceptible pause before Rosamond answered brightly: "I'll tell the table. Strawberries stain my fingers so and John will want me to play the harp for him."

It was Prof. Feed entering. Prof. Feed was altogether the kind of man whom you would expect from his having named his two daughters Vanessa and Rosamond—a book lover, a student, gentle, silvery haired, so un- successful that he had never been able to replenish the store of linen which his bride had brought to her new home. She had died long years before out of sheer inability to cope with the circumstances of life, leaving a large estate and the burden to Vanessa. So far Vanessa had done wonders. She had kept a roof over the heads of the three of them, and she had seen that they were clothed and fed and she had hopes now that Rosamond was going to marry a good man whose wealth was not his least attraction.

Van thought of John Potter as she beat the shortcake and hulled the rosy berries and whipped the cream. In the meantime Rosamond had made the

dining room table fresh with the best tablecloth, the worn silver and a handful of daffodils from Van's little flower garden. When the harp began to sound from the parlor Van knew that the guest had arrived. But it was not until she went to announce supper that she saw him.

John Potter was inclined to elderliness—that is, there were lines in his brown face and silvery threads in his dark hair. He looked a tower of health and vigor beside the drooping, silvery professor who proceeded to drag Van by the hand. She sat behind the old-fashioned stove, her service flashed; there were not any stains upon them. Vanessa kept out of sight as much as possible, though it was scarcely necessary for nobody looked into the background after her. Rosamond was very gay and the professor very talkative. There really was nothing for Van to do but to see that the guest was well supplied with whatever the table afforded.

The short cake was excellent beyond compare and John Potter praised it. He did not, however, eat with so much enjoyment as usual. He appeared to have something on his mind. "He is going to propose to Rosamond," Van thought, and that wicked heartache of hers made her turn so pale that she caught Rosamond looking at her oddly.

After supper John suggested that he have his car sent up and they all go for a spin. There was moonlight and an entrancing night. Rosamond tied a blue veil over her blond hair; her head looked like a flower in the moonlight as she sat beside John on the front seat, Van thought.

Yet even while they were talking a light runabout flashed up from behind and a voice called to them. Rosamond gave a little shriek of delight. "Oh, Bobby, is that you?"

"Sure thing," Bobby Amburst answered. He was alone in the runabout, and when he had found out their dilemma he told Rosamond to jump in and he'd take her back home in a jiffy. "I'll come back for you," he said. "I'll stop at the garage and send somebody out for the car," he promised.

But he never came back. Van and John and the professor trudged back to town through the spring scents and the moonlight. Van's feet did not hurt; her heart had stopped aching; she was so happy she wished she could go walking on forever at John's side. And presently she found that he wished it too. For the professor, hastening on, had left them far enough in the rear to say things without being heard. It was then John took her hand and laid it on his arm and held it there while he

HUMAN RIDDLES THAT HAVE VEXED THE WORLD

By John Elfreth Watkins.

The Mystery of Shakespeare

The world knows least him whom it knows best.

Every nation concedes that the superman who wrote under the name of William Shakespeare, Shakespeare, Shakespeare or Shaxper was the greatest author whom the world ever produced. Little is known of him as a man, save that he was the third child of James Shakespeare, a glover; that his grandfathers were husbandmen; that when eighteen he married Anne Hathaway that five years later he joined a troop of strolling players and went to London, where in two years more he was engaged in revising plays; that he became one of the chief actors of the best company in London; that later he worked as a playwright; that at thirty-two he was able to buy a home at Stratford, where, at forty-six, he finally retired and where at fifty-two he died.

All kinds of conflicting statements have been written concerning his private life. Some claim that he was the uneducated son of illiterate parents; that even his own daughters could neither read nor write. Others would have it that he was forced to leave home for deer stealing in the park of Sir Thomas Lucy. Another story is that when first coming to London he lived upon tips given him for holding horses of rich patrons of the theatre according to still others, after his return to Stratford he became a petty tradesman, selling corn and mail and lending small sums of money.

It is claimed that during the time when he was supposed to be writing plays he lodged in the house of a humble hairdresser. Yet some of his biographers mention his having owned shares in two of the leading London theaters. No two stories of his life agree. Every statement

concerning him is qualified by clauses expressive of uncertainty.

Until sixty years ago, however, no one seems to have doubted that the great masterpieces published under his name were written by this man of mystery. Then there appeared from the pen of an American woman, Della Bacon, an argument attempting to set forth proofs that Shakespeare could not have written these great works.

Since then other writers have waged propaganda purposed to deprive Shakespeare of the honors freely granted by three centuries of admirers. One of the most zealous of these was Ignatius Donnelly, once candidate for Vice President of the United States. Another is Sir Edwin Durning Lawrance, baronet, who in recent years has circulated in various newspapers a million copies of articles attempting to deprive Shakespeare of the credit so long granted to him.

According to Sir Edwin, the real Shakespeare was but a "drunken, illiterate clown," who "was totally unable to write a single letter of his own name, and of whom we are told, if we could not read a line of print."

While some of these propagandists claim that Marlowe was the real author of the Shakespeare plays, a vast majority credit them to Francis Bacon, the greatest English scholar and lawyer of his day.

According to the theory of the propagandists, Bacon, by writing "Richard III," greatly incensed Queen Elizabeth, who was reported to have said, "Seest thou not that I am Richard III?" Bacon, afraid to recall his own identity, thereafter—his claimed—hid himself behind the toga of the Stratford actor.

It must be admitted that the author of Shakespeare's plays displayed a most profound classical learning and a deep knowledge of law, as well as an intimate acquaintance with the details of royal etiquette and of court life. He must have been also an omnivorous reader of history, who had mastered Latin, French, Italian and Spanish, and who had devoured the world's literature, ancient and modern.

To some who have sought the man Shakespeare in the chronicles of his life, such as Stratford, the Avon river or the country lad of his parenthood and rearing, could have acquired all of this knowledge, which, unquestionably, was at the finger ends of Lord Bacon.

It is argued that Shakespeare's name never appeared upon any play until after he had retired to Stratford, and this has been seized upon as evidence of his having been sent there by Bacon that he might remain in obscurity while the great plays were being turned out under his signature—Stratford then being farther from London, in time of travel, than Canada is today.

Strangely enough, there are extant no samples of Shakespeare's writing except several alleged signatures, no two of which are very similar, nor is there in existence a single letter addressed to him save one asking for a loan of £10. And the only contemporary letters referring to him are unimportant missives referring to money.

None of his alleged writings mention picturesque scenes associated with his life, such as Stratford, the Avon river or the magnificent Warwickshire country, whereas these plays are replete with references to St. Alban, Bacon's home.

Bacon's qualifications for writing Shakespeare's plays have been summed up as follows: He was educated not only in English, but in French, Latin, Italian and German; he was the compiler of a book of 1,660 axioms and phrases selected from the greatest authors and works of all times. Because literary geniuses were frowned upon in England during his generation, he spent several years in Paris, where the lit-

erati were in high favor at court. The vexed question of the authorship of Shakespeare's plays has been discussed in 30,000 separate volumes and within the last few months Judge McCall and S. Tullih of the Chicago circuit court has, in an injunction suit, rendered a decision that "the name and character of Shakespeare were used as a mask by Francis Bacon to publish philosophical facts, stories and statements contributing to the literary renaissance in England, which has been the glory of the world."

Electrocuted While Ironing.

CLEVELAND, September 9.—Mrs. Augusta Teury, mother of five children, was electrocuted while using an electric iron in her home here today. An investigation of the cause of the high voltage which made the fatality possible is being made.

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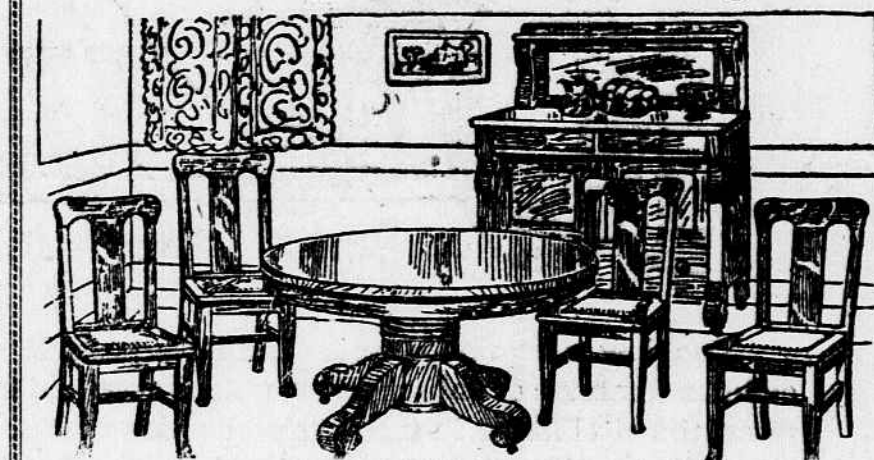


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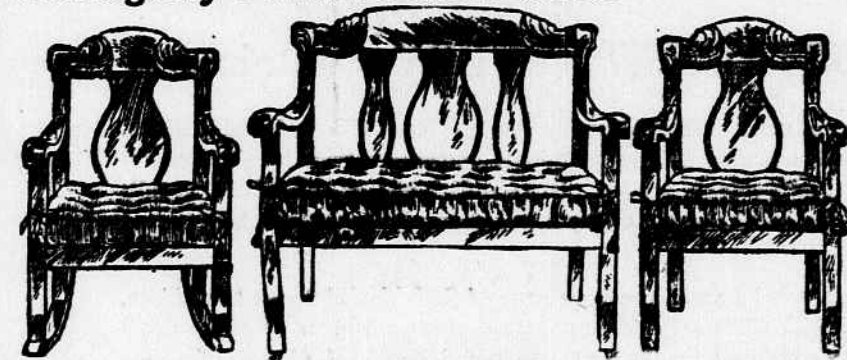
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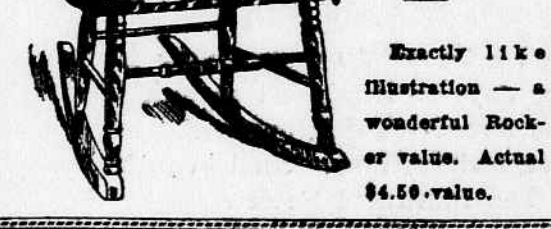
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